

SECRET  
NSC BRIEFING

12 February 1958

CHOU EN-LAI QUILTS AS FOREIGN MINISTER  
(short form)

- I. Chou's resignation does not indicate he is slipping or that power struggle in progress in Peiping.
  - A. Chou remains premier, and new foreign minister, Chen ~~ji~~, probably his choice.
- II. Move appears designed to free Chou for more important business.
  - A. With Mao aging, Chou may want more time to shore up his position against day of Mao's death.
- III. No change expected in Chicom foreign policy.
- IV. Although Chen ~~ji~~ lacks Chou's skill as negotiator Peiping may believe he would be more suitable for negotiations with Taipei.